LESSON #31: MORE WALKING DEVICES

Creating bass lines really accesses the fundamentals of jazz improvisation: we need to understand the harmony and the form, play the instrument well, and react appropriately to the musical moment, all while creating melodies that are supportive and functional. And, as with all improvisation, we need to be open to various tools and possibilities that serve these functions.

This lesson features a few concepts that can be applicable to various musical scenarios and should prove helpful in our improvisations in general. For example, just as we can add a iim7 chord to its relative V7 chord, we can also remove the iim7 when it serves the moment, such as when the soloist is creating something that calls for it or because doing so enables us to create a better bass line in that instance.

EXAMPLE 1

Another choice that we can make is to change the harmonic rhythm by delaying a resolution.

EXAMPLE 2

We can also anticipate an upcoming resolution or chord change.

EXAMPLE 3